

Message Text

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SUBJECT CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: STATE A-2507

1. IMPORTANCE OF UN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRY TOTAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS: BECAUSE OF ITS ADVANCED STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIVELY HIGH PER CAPITA INCOME, ARGENTINA RECEIVES LITTLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM ABROAD UNDER OFFICIAL AUSPICES. DONOR COUNTRIES PROVIDE ALMOST NO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ARGENTINA UNDER BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS. THEREFORE, AS A PERCENTAGE OF OFFICIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, THE UN CONTRIBUTION TO ARGENTINA IS QUITE HIGH. HOWEVER, IN TERMS OF ARGENTINAS OVERALL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE GOVERNMENTS USE OF ARGENTINE TECHNICIANS OR FOREIGN TECHNICIANS OR CONSULTING SERVICES CONTRACTED COMMERCIALY, THE UN CONTRIBUTION IS RATHER SMALL. IN VIEW OF ARGENTINAS AMPLE FOREIGN RESERVES AND HEALTHY EXTERNAL SECTOR, WE CONCLUDE THAT ARGENTINA CAN EASILY AFFORD TO PURCHASE COMMERCIALY THE KIND OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BEING PROVIDED BY THE UN AND THAT ITS DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS WOULD ONLY BE MARGINALLY AFFECTED BY THE TERMINATION OF THE UN

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ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN ARGENTINA.

2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN ARGENTINA HAS NOT BEEN GOOD. WITH A VIEW TOWARD EVALUATING THE DESIRABILITY OF PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN UNDER UN AUSPICES, THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT FROZE MANY PROJECT OPERATIONS (THE PROJECT FREEZE WAS ENDORSED BY THE UN RESREP). IN ADDITION,

THE CREATION IN LATE 1976 OF A NEW MINISTRY OF PLANNING TO OVERSEE AND COORDINATE FOREIGN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS CAUSED FURTHER DELAYS. THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING HAS BEEN AND STILL IS PREOCCUPIED PRINCIPALLY WITH ITS OWN ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS AND THEREFORE HAS HAD DIFFICULTY FULFILLING ITS SUBSTANTIVE ROLE IN THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FIELD. AS A RESULT, THE UN RESREP REPORTS THAT THERE WAS AND UNDERDELIVERY IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ON THE ORDER OF 40 PERCENT IN 1977. HE IS HOPEFUL THAT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN 1978 WILL IMPROVE SUBSTANTIALLY, WITH AT LEAST \$6 MILLION IN PROJECT UNDERTAKEN.

JOSEF SCHUTZENBERGER, THE UN RESREP IN ARGENTINA, APPEARS TO BE AN EXPERIENCED AND WELL QUALIFIED MANAGER. HE REPORTS THAT HE ENJOYS GOOD COOPERATION FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND IS PLEASED WITH THE QUALITY OF PERSONNEL ASSIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO WORK ON UNDP FINANCED PROJECTS (IN MANY INSTANCES, HE AFFIRMS, THE ARGENTINES HAVE BEEN MORE QUALIFIED THAN THE TECHNICIANS SENT BY THE UNDP). HIS MAIN SOURCE OF FRUSTRATION, ABOUT WHICH HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING, HAS BEEN THE FAILURE TO DATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING TO ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

3. PROJECT EVALUATION BY THE UNDP AND AGENCIES: THE UN RESREP REPORTS THAT THE UNDP TRIPARTITE REVIEW SYSTEM IN ARGENTINA IS WORKING WELL. THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN AN INTEREST IN THE REVIEW MECHANISM AND HAS GENERALLY SENT TWO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIGH LEVEL OFFICIALS TO REPRESENT IT IN THE EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: ONE FROM THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND ANOTHER FROM THE SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT AGENCY INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT. IN VIEW OF ARGENTINAS HIGH LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT, THE UN RESREP HAS DECIDED TO CHANGE THE FOCUS OF THE UNDP PROGRAM IN ARGENTINA. FORMERLY, THE UNDP USED TO SEND TECHNICIANS TO WORK ON PROJECTS FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. FREQUENTLY, THESE TECHNICIANS WERE NOT AS WELL TRAINED AS THE ARGENTINE COUNTERPARTS WITH WHOM THEY HAD TO WORKM AS A RESULT, THE UNDP HAS DECIDED TO SEND ONLY TECHNICIANS OF THE HIGHEST CALIBER WITH SKILLS UNAVAILABLE IN ARGENTINA. THIS TYPE OF CONSULTANT IS IN GREAT DEMAND WORLDWIDE AND THEREFORE CAN ONLY REMAIN IN ARGENTINA A SHORT TIME. THE NATIONAL PROJECT DIRECTOR PROVIDES CONTINUITY FOR THE PROJECT.

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4. EXAMINATION OF UNDP PROPOSALS: INASMUCH AS THE US HAS NO BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS IN ARGENTINA, POST LIAISON WITH THE UNDP RESREP ON A REGULAR BASIS IS DEEMED UNNECESSARY.

5. COUNTRY PROGRAM: THE UNDP PROGRAM FOR ARGENTINA FOR 1977-81 IS UNDER PREPARATION AND, ACCORDING TO THE UN RESREP, WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE END OF FEBRUARY IF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING CAN BE MOVED TO APPROVE IT. IN ANY CASE, THE COUNTRY PROGRAM WILL NOT BE READY IN TIME FOR THE GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 1978.

THE 1977-81 PROGRAM HAS FEWER PROJECTS THAN THE PREVIOUS 5 YEAR PROGRAM AND GIVES GREATER EMPHASIS TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRY (OVER 50 PERCENT OF THE FUNDS ARE ALLOTTED FOR THIS PURPOSE).

SINCE THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO BILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ARGENTINA, THE PROBLEM OF COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE IS GREATLY SIMPLIFIED. THE UN RESREP REPORTS THAT HE MAINTAINS CLOSE LIAISON WITH THE IDB RESREP AND THAT HE HIMSELF REPRESENTS THE IBRD IN ARGENTINA.

THE UNDP'S PROGRAMMING IN ARGENTINA COINCIDES WITH ITS "NEW DIMENSIONS" APPROACH. AS A RULE, THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROJECT EXECUTION THROUGH THE APPOINTMENT

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OF A NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EACH PROJECT. THE CHIEF UN TECHNICAL ADVISOR WORKS UNDER THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR.

6. PERFORMANCE OF THE UN SYSTEM: THE UN RESREP IS CLEARLY THE LEADER OF THE UN FAMILY IN ARGENTINA. HE REPRESENTS THE WHOLE UN GROUP AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVELS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND APPEARS TO ENJOY A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SPECIALIZED UN AGENCIES.
THE UNDP DOES COMPLEMENT IBRD FUNDED PROJECTS WHEN POSSIBLE.
FOR EXAMPLE, THE UNDP WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE TRANSPORTATION STUDY IN CONNECTION WITH AN \$105 MILLION HIGHWAY PROJECT FINANCED BY THE IBRD.

7. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE: THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN TREATED ABOVE.

8. WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT: THE UNDP IN ARGENTINA EMPLOYS A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF WMEN, BOTH IN PROFESSIONAL AND CLERICAL CAPACITIES. HOWEVER, THE UNDP HAS MADE LITTLE EFFORT TO PROMOTE THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ARGENTINA. AS THE UN RESREP EXPLAINS IT, THE PROBLEM OF STATUS OF WOMEN IS NOT AS SERIOUS IN ARGENTINA BECAUSE, IN CONTRAST WITH MANY COUNTRIES, WOMEN ARE HIGHLY EDUCATED AND FREQUENTLY OCCUPY DECISION MAKING POSITIONS. IN OUR VIEW, HOWEVER, WOMEN IN ARGENTINA DO NOT GENERALLY HAVE THE SAME STATUS AS MEN IN "MACHO" ARGENTINA AND DO NOT OCCUPY ANY IMPORTANT CABINET LEVEL POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT.

9. SELF RELIANCE AND MUTUAL SELF HELP: ARGENTINA HAS A STRONG SENSE OF SELF RELIANCE REFLECTING BOTH ITS RELATIVELY HIGH HIGH LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL PRIDE. THE GOVERNMENT IS COOPERATING BY PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NEIGHBORING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THEREFORE IS ALREADY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOVING INTO THE "NET CONTRIBUTOR" STATUS. AS THE UN RESREP

HIMSELF ADMITS, THE UNDP'S CATALYTIC ROLE IN INCREASING ARGENTINA'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO LDCS IS ONE OF THE MAIN JUSTIFICATIONS FOR KEEPING AN UNDP MISSION IN ARGENTINA.
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